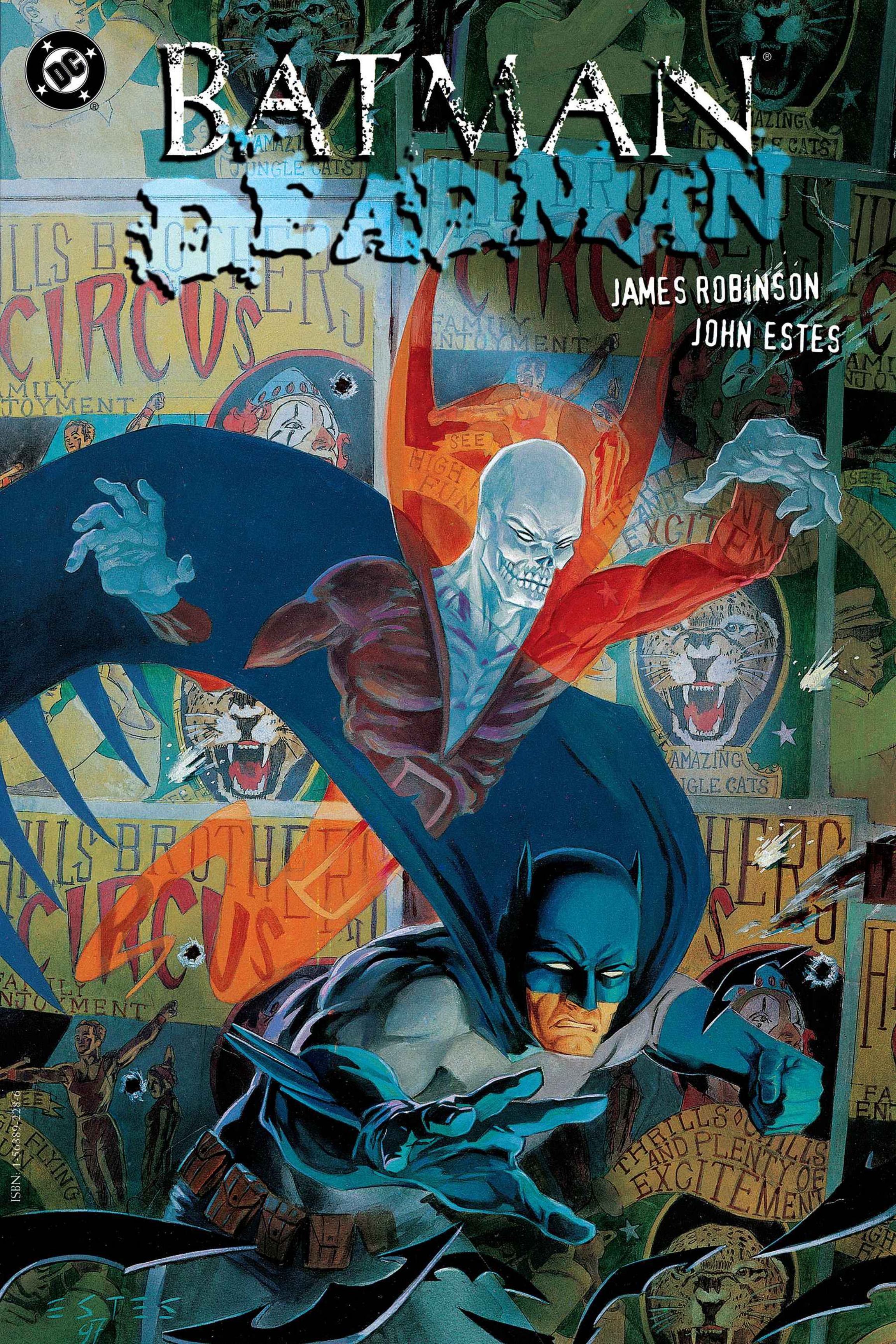


BATMAN
DEADMAN
JAMES ROBINSON
JOHN ESTES
ISBN 1-56389-228-6

BATMAN/DEADMAN

DEATH AND GLORY

BY JAMES ROBINSON
AND JOHN ESTES

LETTERED BY TODD KLEIN

Batman created by Bob Kane

DC Comics

Preface by Dennis O'Neil

If any of you don't know that life is frightening and that one of the things that makes it frightening is the inevitability of death, you're excused. You're probably either a saint, enlightened or hopelessly obtuse and nothing I have to say will mean much to you. Possibly you won't fully enjoy *Death and Glory,* the graphic novel that is the main attraction of this volume, either: oh, you'll like the painted artwork by John Estes and the neatly-turned plot and dialogue by James Robinson, maybe, but the story won't bore into your soul. If you're a saint, enlightened or obtuse. If you're like most of the rest of us, you'll enjoy the technical accomplishments of Messrs. Estes and Robinson and the dark tale they have to tell. One way or another, as the title indicates, it's about death which scares us and because it scares us, is also endlessly fascinating.

Given the characters featured, it *has* to be about death. Batman—born Bruce Wayne—is who he is because he witnessed the slaying of his parents. Later, he adopted the persona of a bat—in a healthy handful of mythologies, the mammal that embodies or incarnates the spirits of the deceased. Every night he emerges like a wraith from a cave—a hole in the ground—to wreak vengeance on wrongdoers, mostly killers. He can't do anything about the monster who murdered his mother and father, but he *can* deal justice to similar monsters. And he does—he has, in fact, ever since he first appeared in Detective Comics, dated May, 1939.

Batman is *like* a wraith. Deadman goes him one better—Deadman *is* a wraith. His origin story, published in Strange Adventures in October of 1967, shows us Boston Brand, a star aerialist, killed by a sniper's bullet as he performs his circus act. Later events doom him to wander the Earth, a ghost, until he finds his slayer.

Batman and Deadman are superficially dissimilar. For openers, they don't look alike: Batman's mien is as dark as his namesake while Deadman, having died in his performing togs, is actually quite colorful. Their personalities are equally contrasting: Batman is cool, rational, his personal torments carefully concealed behind an implacable facade. Deadman is anything but implacable: when he was alive he was impulsive and violent; as a specter, he is the embodiment (or *disembodiment*) of rage.

Two very different characters? Well, yes. But also similar: they have the same mission, really—a mission of redress. They are as helpless before the fact of death as any of us, but they *can* do something about those who end life for reasons of personal greed and hatred. Watching them devote themselves to this mission is absorbing, and watching them do it together is both absorbing and logical.

Logical, anyway, in terms of drama and graphic storytelling. They've been a team dozens of times in the past 30-odd years as any number of writers and artists saw the possibilities in teaming them in the same narrative. The result, for which we are grateful, has been a lot of good stories.

Add *Death and Glory* to the list, and rank it high. It is an example of modern, sophisticated comics that all who appreciate the form will applaud and a tale that might just, indeed, bore into your soul. Unless you're saintly, enlightened or obtuse. And maybe even then.

Dennis O'Neil, September, 1996


TICK
TICK
TICK
HA
TICK

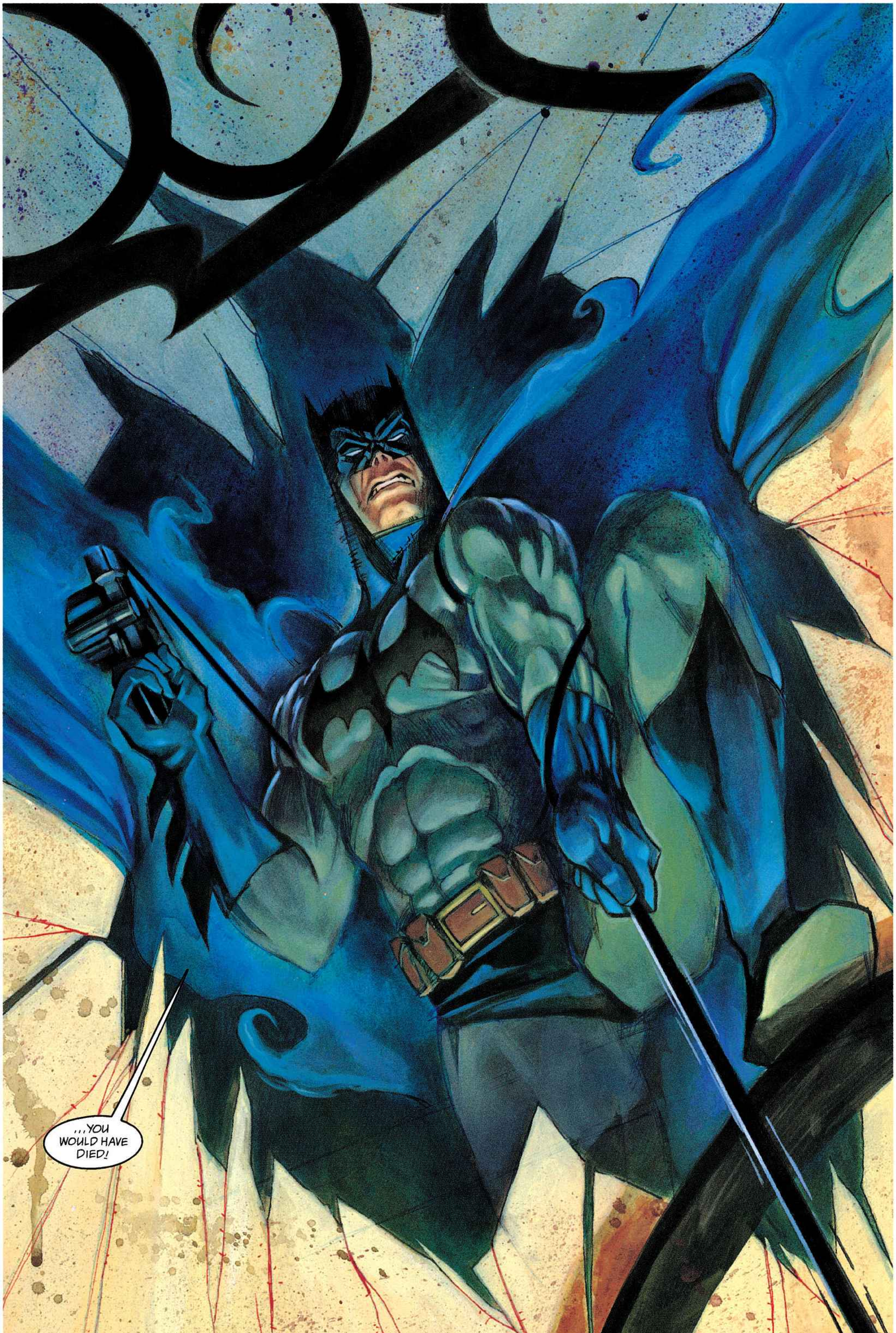

TICK
TICK
HE HA
HA...HA...YOU MAY HAVE RUINED THIS CAPRICE. BUT I'VE THE NEXT TO PLAN.


TIME IS TIGHT!
TICK
TIME TO GO!


MANIAC...


KKSSHHHH


TICK


...YOU WOULD HAVE DIED!



THERE! YOU'RE HELPLESS. HOW I LIKE YOU.
OH? YOU THINK ME MAKING LIKE A PENDULUM ENDS THINGS?
TICK
...OH NO!
NIGHT'S TOO YOUNG TO HANG AROUND. WIND UP HERE'S TOO CHILL. HA! HAHA!
TICK
THERE'S A HOT APPLE CIDER SOMEWHERE IN THIS CITY WITH MY NAME ON IT.
ACID IN MY FLOWER...
...WILL...
TICK
SSSSSSS
HAHEHA... SEE TO THAT.
JOKER! NO!
DON'T BURN THE...
TI--




...ROPE...?
SWAT

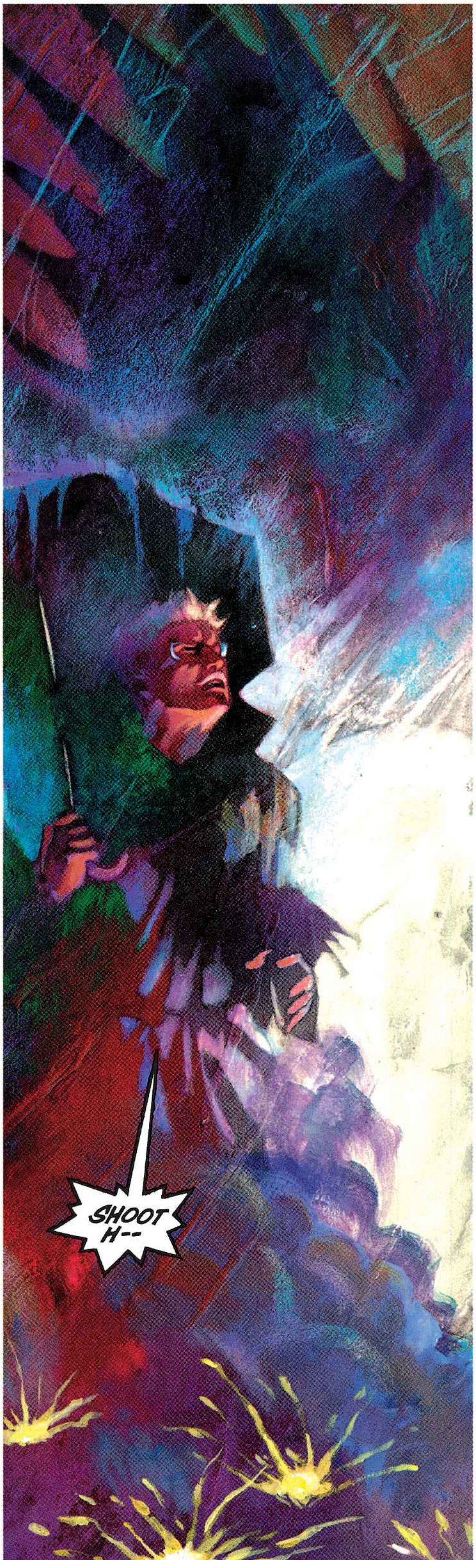

What?
WHAT... IS... THIS?
How did this hap--
LIVE 10:21 PM
ACTION 5 NEWS
--ATTENDING THE PRIVATE BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR MARTIN LOPEZ, POPULAR GOTHAM CITY COUNCILMAN.
LIVE 5
SANDI STARKLAND
The dead. So many. I--
THIS IS A MISTAKE. HAS TO BE.
THAT'S IT, BATMAN. PUT DOWN THE KNIFE.
OKAY. I'LL COOPERATE.
Need to learn what happened.

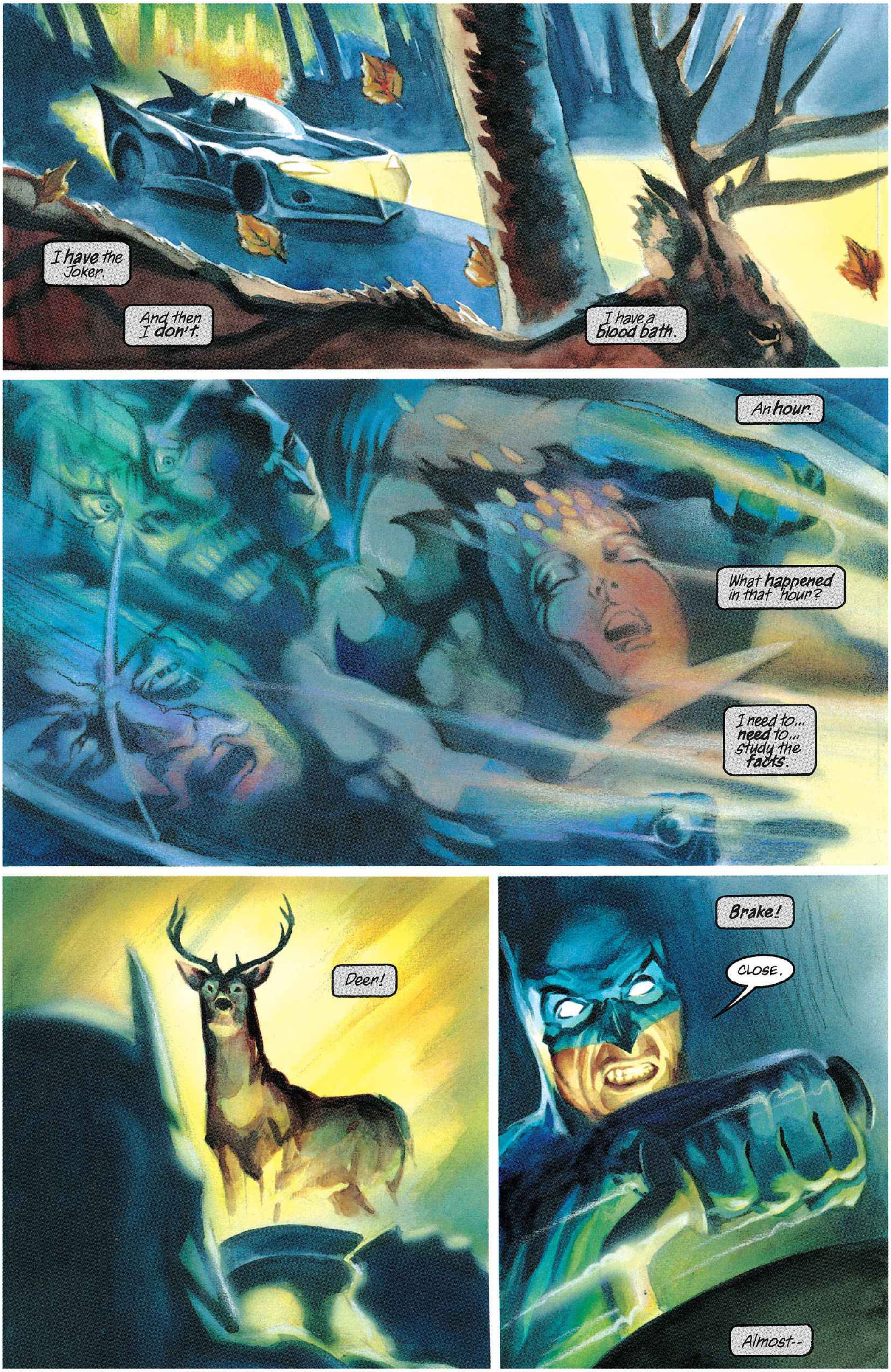

BATMAN, LISTEN CAREFULLY. YOU ARE SURROUNDED. YOU CAN NOT ESCAPE...
...PUT THE KNIFE DOWN AND LET THE GIRL GO.
HE KILLED THEM ALL! BUTCHERED THEM! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. MARTIN LOPEZ... HIS FAMILY. HIS... MY FRIENDS. ALL OF THEM.
THEY SAID HE WAS CLOSE TO THE EDGE. THEY ALL TOLD ME. DIDN'T THINK HE'D SNAP. NOT LIKE THIS.
THE MURDER OF LOPEZ, A CLOSE FRIEND OF GORDON, HAS PRODUCED AN UNEXPECTED HOSTILITY FROM THE COMMISSIONER...
9339 GOTHAM CITY POLICE
"...TOWARDS THE VIGILANTE, BATMAN."
HE'S A MAD DOG. HE NEEDS TO BE BROUGHT DOWN. NOW!
NO! WE HAVE MEN IN THERE. WE HAVE A HOSTAGE AT RISK. NO SHOOTING. THAT IS FINAL!
LOWE
GIVE ME THAT! I'M YOUR SUPERIOR, LOWE. DON'T FORGET IT!
LISTEN, MEN...
...THIS IS YOUR COMMISSIONER.
AS SOON AS YOU CAN... SHOOT TO KILL. YOU GOT THAT?!
I'M WORKING WITH YOU HERE. DON'T DO ANY-THING--
HEY, BATS...
...I BET YOU'D RATHER BE IN BOSTON.


KPOW KPOW KPOW KPOW
CRINK
MURREY'S GONE CRAZY!
SHOOTING EVERYWHERE! WHAT THE--
THWAK
BANG BANG BANG BANG
UH


SWAT member scattering his own men.
I don't understand.
...but...
...use...
...distraction.
BANG
THUNK
BANG


WATCH--
HE'S
DOWN--
DROPPED!
fhut
fhut
fhut


FIRE! SHOOT! SHOOT! KILL THE CRAZY--

SHOOT H--



I have the Joker.
And then I don't.
I have a blood bath.
An hour.
What happened in that hour?
I need to... need to... study the facts.
Deer!
Brake!
CLOSE.
Almost--


CLICK
UHH.
COMPUTER. TIME ELAPSED SINCE BRAKING?
TIME SPENT STATIONARY. FOUR MINUTES, FIFTY-THREE SECONDS.
I lose an hour.
FOUR MINUTES, FIFTY-FOUR SECONDS.
And then five minutes.
FOUR MINUTES, FIFTY-FIVE SECONDS.
But... at least now...
I BET YOU'D RATHER BE IN BOSTON...
...I THINK I KNOW MORE.


-- BRINGS THE STARTLING NEWS TODAY THAT BATMAN ATTACKED A RESTAURANT--
TODAY ON CURRENT EVENT... "BATMAN/ BATMANIAC!"
--SO, DR. STROTHERS, TELL US WHAT YOU FEEL REGARDING THIS.
WELL, ANGELA, I FEEL THE VIGILANTE'S SELF-APPOINTED WAR ON CRIME HAS CAUSED--
DR. STROTHERS, EARLIER ON ANOTHER SHOW, STATED THAT BATMAN'S PSYCHOTIC EPISODE WAS DUE TO THE STRAIN OF HIS LIFE BATTLING CRIME.
TODAY ON INSIDE AFFAIR..."BATMAN GONE BATTY."
COMING FORWARD, YVONNE CONNER, CLAIMING TO HAVE BEEN BATMAN'S SECRET LOVER FOR MANY YEARS.
ACCORDING TO MISS CONNER, DIVORCED MOTHER OF TWO, BATMAN'S MADNESS IS DUE TO--


MISS CONNER? MOTHER OF TWO? WILL SHE BE COMING TO STAY? I'LL HAVE THE NURSERY REPAINTED.


DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU HEAR ON TELE-VISION.
OH BUT I DO, SIR. EVERY WONDERFUL WORD.
GORDON HERE... HIS HATE... IS SOMETHING I DON'T BELIEVE.
OR WISH I DIDN'T.
I WANT HIM. I WANT HIM ALIVE OR DEAD, BUT I WANT HIM.
I'VE NEVER KNOWN JIM THIS... VENGEFUL. ESPECIALLY AGAINST ME. IT'S--
A LITTLE HARD TO TAKE? I'M SURE. BUT YOU MUST UNDERSTAND, MASTER BRUCE, MARTIN LOPEZ WAS A DEAR FRIEND OF THE COMMIS-SIONER'S.
I'M SURE GORDON IS MERELY REACTING TO THE SHOCK OF HIS LOSS.
NEWS 7
I HOPE, ALFRED. I HOPE.
MISS CUMMINGS, THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF LAST NIGHT'S SLAUGH-TER, NOTED THAT THROUGHOUT THE MURDERS BATMAN REPEATEDLY CRIED OUT FOR "YEATS," CLAIMING THIS MAN WAS IN THE BUILDING.
WHO THIS YEATS MIGHT BE, AND WHETHER HE ACTUALLY EXISTS OR IS MERELY MORE OF BATMAN'S APPARENT PSYCHOSIS IS SOMETHING THE POLICE ARE APPARENTLY INVESTI-GATING FURTHER.
THIS SITUATION... SO MUCH UNEXPLAINABLE. I'M SHOOTING IN THE DARK HERE BUT...
...PERHAPS THERE MIGHT BE SOME SUPERNATURAL ELEMENT TO IT.
OH, I KNOW THERE IS. I KNOW WHAT... OR RATHER WHO.


HE'S BEEN RUNNING... WITHOUT A MOMENT EVEN TO CATCH HIS BREATH... FOR DAYS NOW. DAYS.
HE KNOWS THIS IS HIS TALENT... NOT RUNNING EXACTLY, BUT FLEEING... RUNNING FROM. HIS WHOLE LIFE. FROM PARENTS HE COULDN'T LIVE WITH, AN EDUCATION HE FOUND TOO DIFFICULT, A MARRIAGE AND FATHERHOOD HE FOUND TOO DEMANDING, AND FROM THE MEN IN THE MANY CITIES HE'S PASSED THROUGH, WHO HE ENDED UP OWING MONEY FOR THIS BET OR THAT WAGER.
OH YES, ALBERT YEATS IS GOOD AT RUNNING FROM. VERY GOOD.
BUT THIS... THE TERRIBLE EVENTS THAT BEGAN WITH THE MILLIONAIRE AND THE MAGE. THAT MIGHT BE ONE OF THE THREE THINGS HE CAN'T ELUDE.
FIRSTLY, THE MAGE HAS MEN (AT LEAST YEATS THINKS THEY'RE MEN) WHO HUNT HIM.
THEN THERE IS BATMAN, WHO HUNTS HIM TOO. THIS NEW, TERRIFYING VERSION OF THE BATMAN HE'S KNOWN FROM TELEVISION AND MAGAZINES... WHO CAME TO THE RESTAURANT FOR HIM... CAME AND KILLED.
AND THERE IS THE FINAL THING... THE LAST, FINAL, THIRD THING. AND NO MATTER HOW FAST OR FAR HE RUNS... NO MATTER HOW WELL HE HIDES... THIS LAST THING CAN'T BE ELUDED.

NO MATTER HOW FAST.
FICKLE FINGER OF FATE
NO MATTER HOW FAR.
ALBERT YEATS HAS AIDS.
OH, AL... BERT.


WE KNOW YOU'RE HERE, ALBERT.
WE KNOW.
RUNNING'S USELESS.
USELESS.
LIKE LEAVES ON THE GROUND IN FALL.
LIKE THE KETCHUP LEFT ON THE SIDE OF THE PLATE.
LIKE A BAND-AID AFTER THE CUT'S HEALED.
RUNNING'S USELESS.
SO WHY DON'T YOU COME OUT. AND WE CAN BE FRIENDS.
KREEK

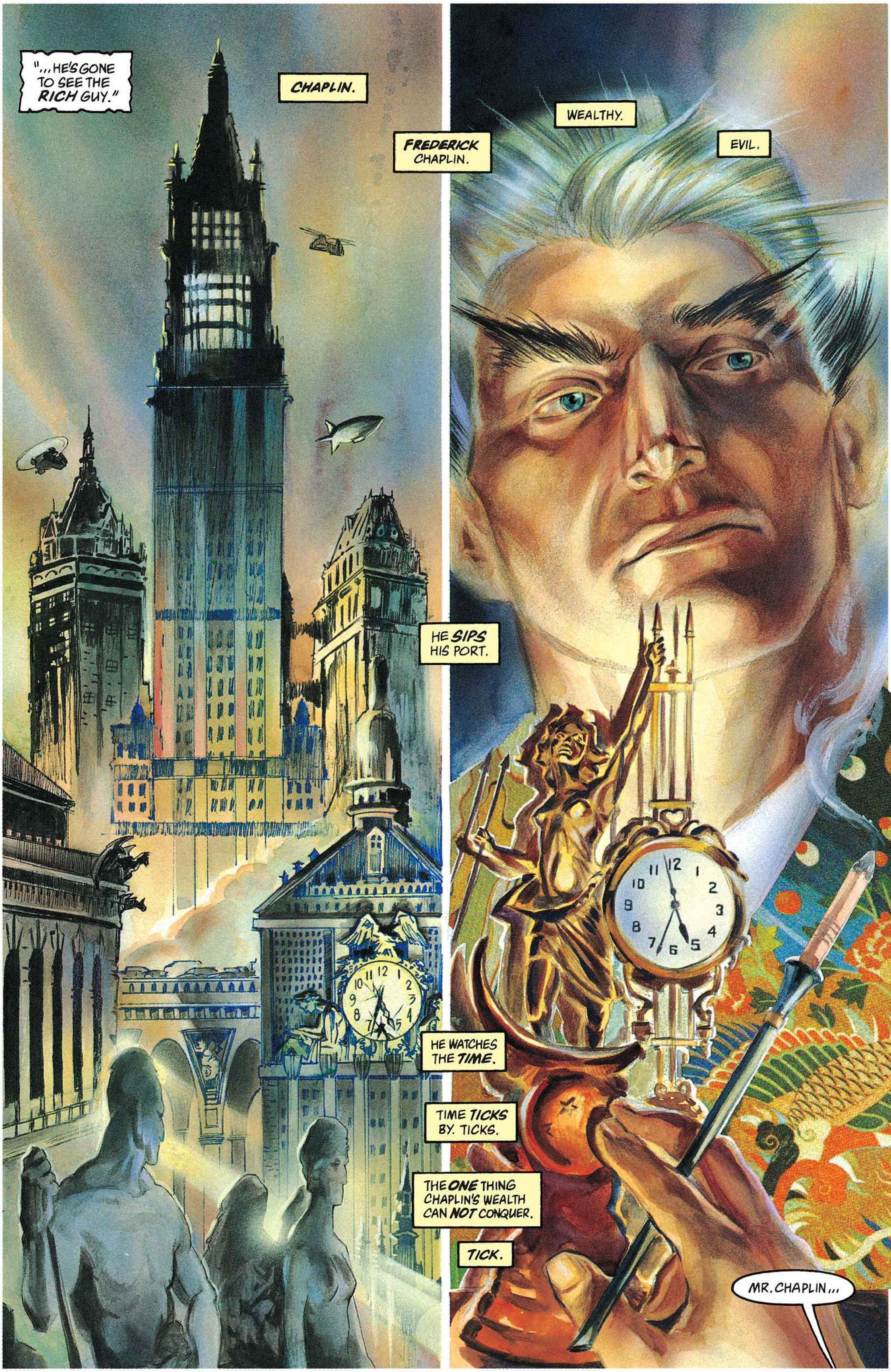

DON'T RESIST THE INEVITABLE. IF WE DON'T CATCH YOU NOW, YOU KNOW WE'LL CATCH YOU LATER.
ARE YOU LISTENING, ALBERT? YOU CAN'T ESCAPE THE INEVITABLE.
THA THUNK
FREAK
IF ANYBODY KNOWS THAT...
...IT'S ALBERT YEATS.
BUT STILL HE RUNS.


I MUST BE VERY IMPORTANT. FOR YOU TO BREAK INTO PRISON...
...FOR YOU TO RISK CAPTURE HERE.
YOU'RE THE ONLY "MAGICAL VILLAIN" CURRENTLY BEHIND BARS, FAUST. THAT'S WHY I'M HERE.
I'M A MAGICAL VILLAIN? WHY, THANK YOU.
THAT'S HOW THE NEWSPAPERS TERM SUCH AS YOU. NOTHING MORE. DON'T LET IT GO TO YOUR HEAD.
I NEED YOUR TALENTS, FAUST.
I HAVE A PROBLEM. I HAVE A MYSTERY. IT NEEDS SOLVING.
AND YOU NEED ADVICE ON MATTERS ARCANE IN ORDER TO DO THAT?
THAT'S RIGHT. YOU HAVE A PAROLE HEARING COMING UP. A RECOMMENDATION FROM ME MIGHT HELP THAT. IF I CAN PROVE MY OWN INNOCENCE BY THEN.
AND IF I REFUSE?
THERE'S THE CHANCE I COULD GO ON TO PROVE MY INNOCENCE WITHOUT YOU. I REPEAT, YOU HAVE A PAROLE HEARING COMING UP.
A WORD FROM ME MIGHT JUST AS EASILY HURT IT.
SO,
DO WE HAVE A DEAL, FAUST?
CALL ME FELIX.


SO THOSE ARE THE FACTS?
AS MANY AS YOU NEED TO KNOW. YES.
AND YOU THINK YOU KNOW WHO'S RESPONSIBLE? YOU THINK YOU WERE POS-SESSED BY A SPIRIT?
YES, BUT IT SADDENS ME TO COME TO THE CON-CLUSION. THAT SPIRIT AND I HAVE SOMETHING OF A HISTORY. A GOOD ONE UNTIL NOW.
I NEED TO CAPTURE THIS WRAITH. I NEED TO MAKE HIS SPIRIT FORM WHOLE AND TANGIBLE SO I CAN RESTRAIN HIM, QUESTION THE REASONS FOR HIS ACTIONS...
...AND ULTIMATELY PROVE IT WASN'T ME GOVERNING MYSELF WHEN I KILLED ALL THOSE PEOPLE.
SOMEHOW.
HERE. THESE BOOKS. THEY'RE A START. PARTS OF THE SPELLS WITHIN MAY BE OF USE. THE REST YOU'LL HAVE TO DO YOURSELF.
OH, AND IT'S NOT SOMETHING I BROADCAST, BUT I DO POSSESS A SMALL AMOUNT OF PSYCHIC ABILITY.
I'M PICKING UP SOMETHING ABOUT THE SPIRIT IN QUESTION. HE WAS A RESTLESS GHOST WHO ONCE KNEW THE CHEERS OF THE CIRCUS CROWD.
BELIEVE ME, FAUST, I KNOW.



YOU KNOW WHAT I DON'T LIKE?
WHAT'S THAT?
WHEN PEOPLE PUT WALNUTS IN MY SALAD.
WAIT A MINUTE! WHO ON THIS PLANET PUTS WALNUTS IN A SALAD? WHEN DOES THAT EVER HAPPEN? 'CEPT OF COURSE, IF YOU ORDER A WALDORF.
THAT'S WHAT I ORDER. A WALDORF SALAD. THAT'S THE ONE I LIKE... EXCEPT WHEN THEY PUT WALNUTS IN IT.
THAT'S WHAT GOES IN A WALDORF SALAD, GENIUS... WALNUTS. WALDORF. WALNUTS. GET IT?
IN FACT, ANY TIME YOU GOT A WALDORF SALAD WITHOUT WALNUTS YOU WAS GYPPED.
Pank
NO.
YEAH.
CLACK
YOU KNOW, MAYBE IT'S MUSHROOMS I DON'T LIKE IN SALADS ANYWAY.
I GIVE UP.
'N' I GAVE AT THE OFFICE. HEY, WHERE'S REMY? I THOUGHT HE'D BE HERE BY NOW.
HE'S GONE TO KEEP OUR BENEFACTOR SWEET.
HE'S AT CHAPLIN'S?
YEAH...


"...HE'S GONE TO SEE THE RICH GUY."
CHAPLIN.
FREDERICK CHAPLIN.
WEALTHY.
EVIL.
HE SIPS HIS PORT.
HE WATCHES THE TIME.
TIME TICKS BY. TICKS.
THE ONE THING CHAPLIN'S WEALTH CAN NOT CONQUER.
TICK.
MR. CHAPLIN...


...MR. DeSHARD IS HERE.
SO I SEE.
COME IN, REMY. YOU'VE BROUGHT ME GOOD NEWS, I HOPE.
YES, GOOD NEWS. GREAT NEWS!
YOU FOUND ALBERT YEATS? THAT IS WONDERFUL NEWS.
I AGREE IT WOULD BE. UNFORTUNATELY THAT ISN'T THE NEWS I BRING.
OH.
WELL THEN? WHAT?


WE ALMOST CAUGHT YEATS. HE WAS IN A CHURCH. MY BOYS WERE CLOSE.
BUT HE GOT AWAY.
WELL YOU'RE RIGHT, THE NEWS ISN'T WONDERFUL.
IN FACT I'D GIVE YOU THE ARGUMENT THAT THE NEWS IS FAR FROM EVEN GOOD.
NO. DON'T WORRY. WE'LL FIND HIM. WE WERE CLOSE. THAT'S GOOD. IT MEANS THE NEXT TIME WE'LL BE CLOSER.
NOW I KNOW WHERE HE'S BEEN, I CAN FOLLOW HIS TRAIL... THE TRAIL OF PSYCHIC ENERGY WE ALL HAVE.
IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THAT TRAIL WILL LEAD ME TO HIM.
A SMALL MATTER OF TIME, I HOPE. WE HAVE TWO DAYS TO FIND HIM.
WE WILL.
WE'D BETTER. NEED I REMIND YOU IT'S MY MONEY PAYING FOR YOU AND YOUR ABILITIES.
AND NEED I ALSO REMIND YOU, THAT IT'S NOT EVEN MY LIFE THAT'S AT STAKE IF WE DON'T FIND YEATS.
IT'S MY SOUL.
TICK.
MY IMMORTAL SOUL.
TICK.
TICK.


HE WAITED UNTIL THE **REQUIRED** TIME.
THOUGH HE'D **NEEDED** THE DELAY. TO **LEARN** THIS RITE IN THE **ANCIENT** TONGUE OF A **RACE** OTHERWISE LONG **LOST** TO MODERN **SCHOLARS**.
AND HE'S NEEDED THE TIME TO **PREPARE**. TO PREPARE THE **AREA**.
AND TO PREPARE **HIMSELF**. MENTALLY.
HE TREMBLES **SLIGHTLY**. THEN **REALIZES** THIS, SIGHS, AND REGAINS CONTROL. THE TREMBLING **STOPS**.
HE **SIGHS** AGAIN.
AND THEN.
ASSIS **FOORT** NELEGRIS
TRUST
LIBERTY


mmf...
HUUHHRRRAAAA
SKREEE


WHHONALL JAT.
QUILOP DDANDNS S1 REBWAN.
VOOOOOOO VA TATALA.


THUDD
USSIS ASLA ERRIT.
THUDD
CAZZI MO REDDLEW.
THUDD
PANNELOP TI QUOC.
NELIGRIS.
THUDD
NELIGRIS.
IT WAS WEDNESDAY.
NELIGRIS.


AARHHHHH!




BATS?
WHA...T... HAVE...
...YOU DONE?
WHY HAVE--
I was wrong.
He's not the one.
The look in his eyes tells me that.
And my spell was wrong too.
Supposed to draw him from the spirit world. Make him whole so I could take him to the authorities.
Get him to confess to possessing me and doing the killings.
Supposed to.
Instead it's killing him.


No. A ghost can't die.
It's draining him away.
His very essence.
And my fault.
Have to break the spell!
Destroy its hold.
The chalice.
The blood.
Try--
-- try to --


TRUST
BATS, BATS, BATS...
...ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS ASK.


...ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS ASK.
MASTER BRUCE.
IT'S THE BAT SIGNAL. UP IN--
MY WORD! QUITE A PARTY YOU'VE HAD.
OR IS THIS WHAT THEY'RE CALLING MODERN ART NOWADAYS?
IN GOD W
LIBERTY
WHAT THIS IS, ALFRED, IS MY STUPIDITY... RESULTING IN MY DESTROYING THE VERY SOUL... THE IMMORTAL SOUL OF AN OLD FRIEND.
OH I DO HOPE SO.
HEAVEN KNOWS YOU'RE NOT GUILTY ABOUT ENOUGH THINGS AS IT IS.



ANYWAY.
YOU SAY THERE'S THE SIGNAL?
YES, THOUGH I FEAR IT MAY BE A TRAP.
PERHAPS.
BUT IT'S STILL THE SIGNAL. HOW CAN IT GO UN-ANSWERED?
WHOA. BATS. I'M NOT SAYING YOU SHOULDN'T.
BUT BEFORE GALLOPING OFF, I'D JUST WAIT UNTIL I KNEW THE WHOLE PICTURE. IF I WAS YOU.
BOSTON?
CUS
HILLS
CIRCUS
LATER...
"SO I CAME TO GOTHAM FOR A COUPLE OF REASONS. I WAS THINKING OF LOOKING YOU UP. I FIGURED FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE, I'D FLY INTO SOMEONE'S BOD AND SAY HELLO."
BUT IT WAS A GREATER "FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE" THAT WAS THE MAIN REASON I HIT YOUR BURG. MY CIRCUS, THE ONE I WAS THE HEADLINER OF WHEN I GOT OFFED BY THE HOOK.
YES, I KNOW.
IT'S IN TOWN AT THE MOMENT, YOU KNOW THAT TOO?
ERRR
WELL WHY WOULD YOU? YOU DON'T LOOK THE TYPE FOR PLEASANT FAMILY FUN.


"BUT I WENT THERE. JUST TO SEE THE OLD GANG. FLOAT AROUND AND ENJOY THE ATMOSPHERE.
ENTER
VASHNU
"AND IT WAS ONE OF MY OLD GANG WHO DRAGGED ME INTO THE MESS WE'RE NOW BOTH IN.
"VASHNU. INDIAN FAKIR. HIS STAGE PERSONA IS DELIBERATELY OVER-BLOWN AND HOOEY. THE RUBES LAP IT UP.
"THING IS, BENEATH THE FAKERY, HIS MYSTICAL POWERS ARE ALL TRUE. MANY'S THE TIME HE'S BEEN A CONDUIT TO RAMA KUSHNA FOR ME."
RAMA KUSHNA?
GOD.
OH.
"SO I FLOAT BY, AND SAY HELLO.
"VASHNU SENSES MY PRESENCE LIKE HE SOMETIMES DOES. HE OPENS HIS MOUTH AND SAYS...
"...MY NAME."
BOSTON.
"AND THEN EVERYTHING GOES WHITE."

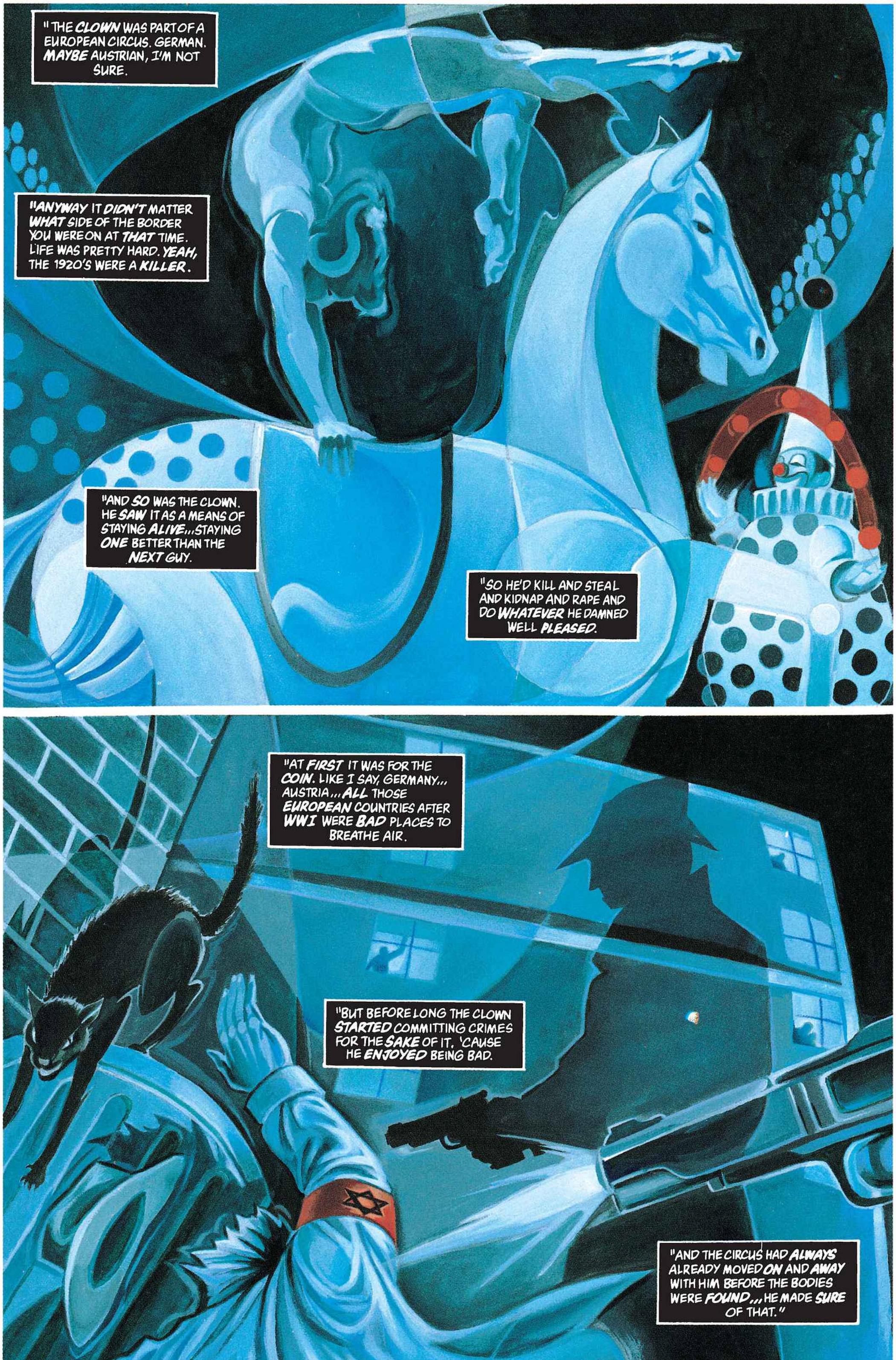

"RAMA?
"GEEZ, YOU GOT YOUR WAYS, HAVEN'T YOU. THIS YOUR IDEA OF BEING SUBTLE?"
"THERE ISN'T TIME FOR SUBTLETY, BOSTON.
"I BROUGHT YOU TO GOTHAM. I ARRANGED THE CIRCUS'S SCHEDULE AND PLANTED THE SEED THAT YOU WOULD VISIT THEM HERE."
"FIGURES. I HAVEN'T HAD A DECENT THOUGHT OF MY OWN SINCE I HOOKED UP WITH YOU. WHY WOULD THAT CHANGE?"
"THERE IS A MAN IN GOTHAM CITY. FREDERICK CHAPLIN. HE BARTERED HIS SOUL, MANY YEARS GONE, FOR SUCCESS AND THE RICHES THAT BRINGS. FOR DECADES HE'S ENJOYED THE BENEFITS OF HIS BARGAIN."
"HIS SOUL? WHO'D HE GIVE IT TO?"

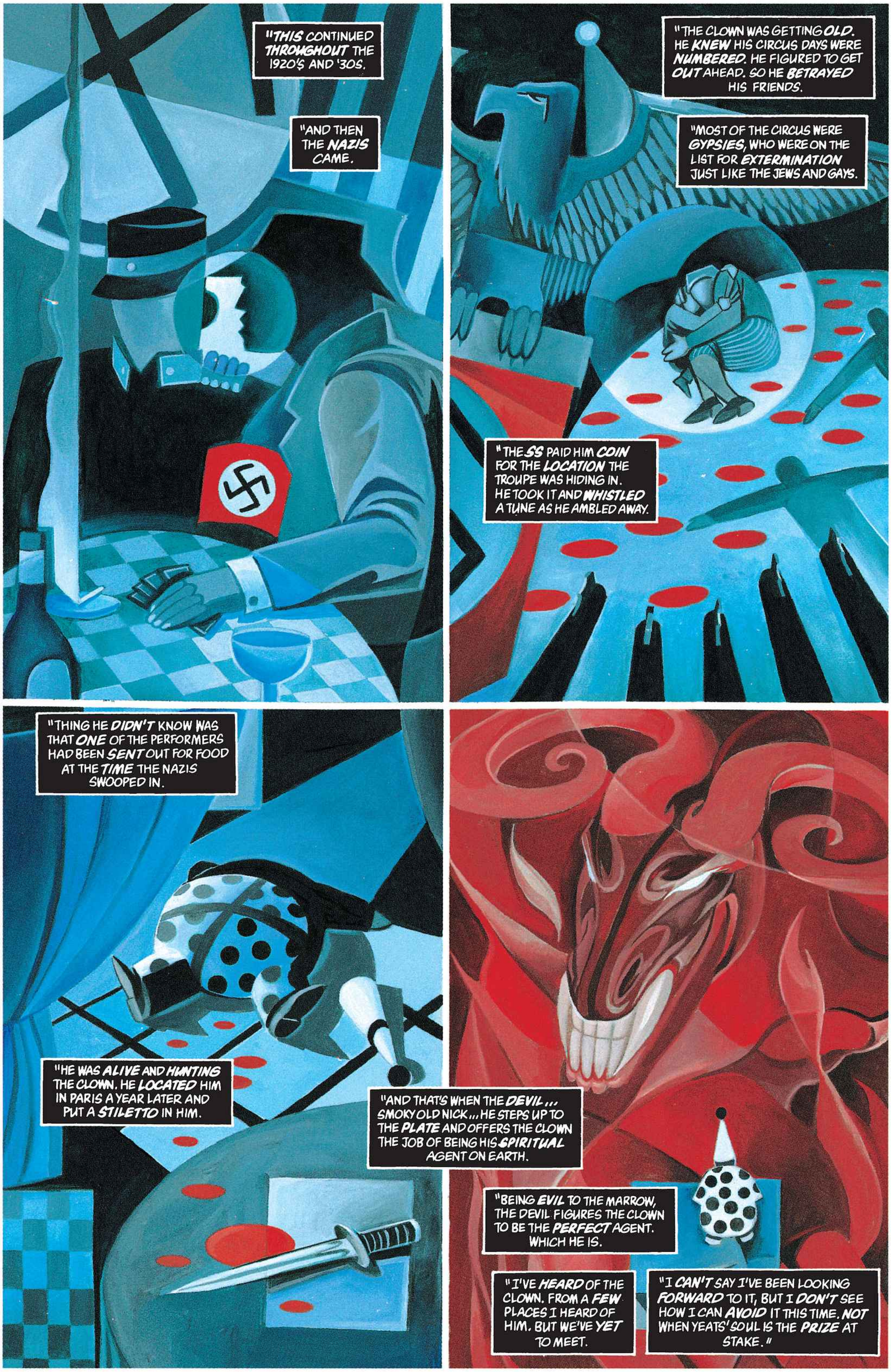

"THE DEVIL HAS MANY NAMES, BOSTON. WHICH WOULD YOU HAVE ME USE?"
"OLD NICK, HUH? WELL WHAT OF IT? CHAPLIN DID IT. IT'S HIS PROBLEM."
"CHAPLIN HAS ENJOYED FIFTEEN WONDERFUL YEARS. HE WOULD EXTEND THAT IF HE COULD.
"HE CONTACTED A MAGE, REMY DESHARD, LAST YEAR TO BEGIN A HUNT. TO FIND ANOTHER BORN AT THE EXACT SAME MINUTE, OF THE SAME DAY, OF THE SAME YEAR.
"THE MAN THEY FOUND WAS POOR, AND AN ADDICT. ALBERT YEATS. HE WAS EASILY WOOED BY TALES OF EASY MONEY.
"THE RITE DESHARD PERFORMED INVOLVED VILE ACTS AND HUMAN SACRIFICE. IT TOOK DAYS. AT THE END OF IT, HOWEVER, REMY DESHARD HAD SUCCESSFULLY TRANSFERRED THE PACT CHAPLIN MADE 15 YEARS AGO TO POOR YEATS' SOUL."



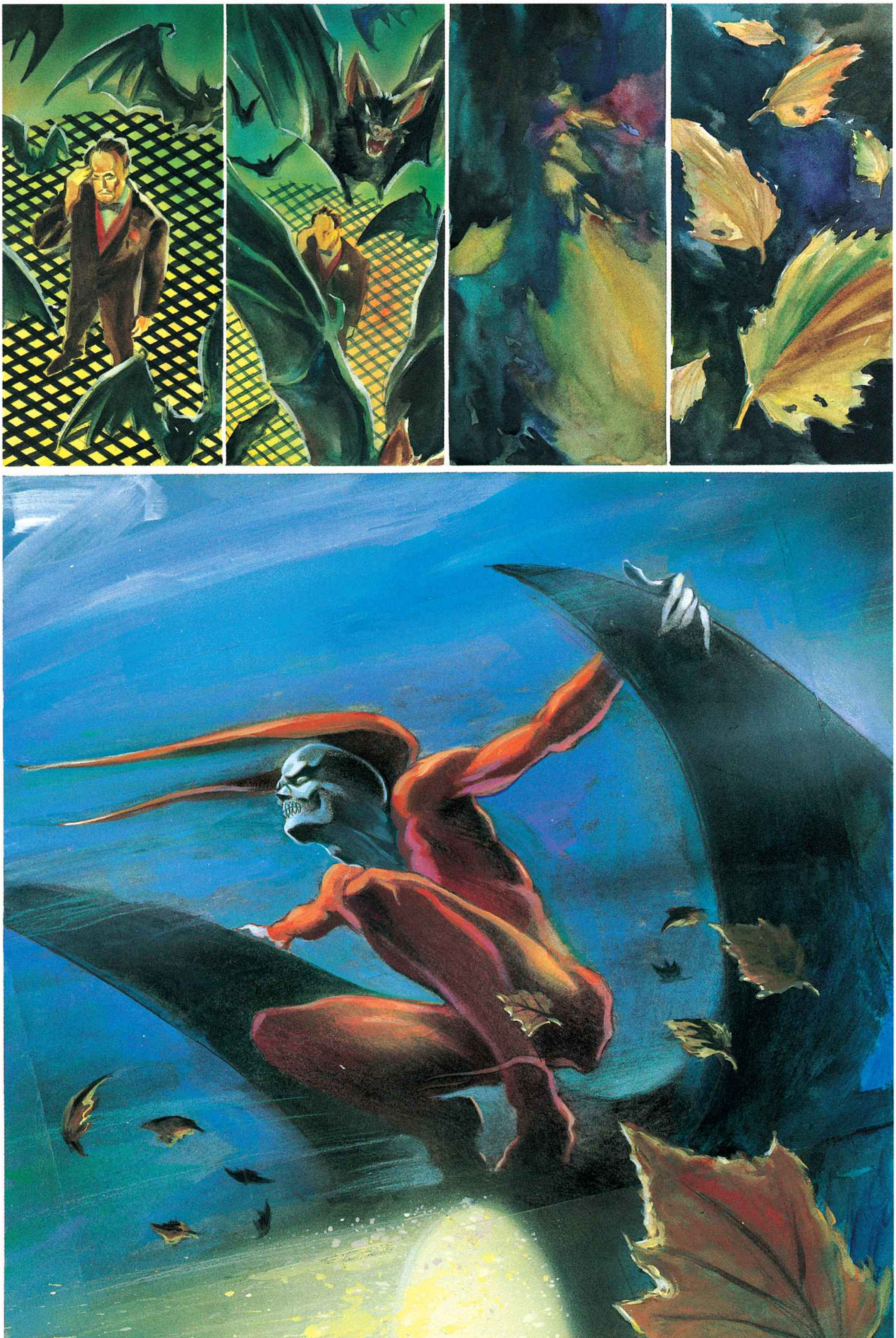
AND?
WHAT DID HE SAY?
SHE, BATS. GOD IS A WOMAN, REMEMBER?
ALL RIGHT, WHAT DID SHE SAY?
THIS IS THE BIG ONE, BATMAN. IT TAKES A WHOLE HEAP OF FAITH AND ACCEPTANCE ON YOUR PART... YOU, THE SCIENTIST AND ALL.
WE REINCARNATE. ALL OF US.
I'LL BUY IT. A HERO NAMED DR. FATE PROVED THAT TO ME.
ALBERT YEATS IS GOING TO REINCARNATE. NEXT GO AROUND HE'LL BE A VERY SPECIAL PERSON.
HOW SPECIAL?
WELL THAT DEPENDS ON WHAT FAITH YOU ARE. IF YOU'RE CHRISTIAN THEN ALBERT YEATS IS... UM... HOW CAN I PUT THIS...
TRY WORDS OF TWO SYLLABLES OR LESS.
HE'S THE SECOND COMING.
OR IF YOU'RE JEWISH HE'S THE FIRST COMING.
IF YOU'RE BUDDHIST, OR MUSLIM OR HINDU, I'M NOT SURE WHAT THAT WILL MAKE HIM BUT--
I GET THE POINT, BOSTON.
IN YEATS' NEXT INCARNATION HE OR SHE, DEPENDING WHICH SEX HE'S REBORN AS, IS GOING TO UNITE ALL FAITHS AND BRING THE WORLD TO A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF ITSELF.
MAYBE WITHIN YOUR LIFETIME. MAYBE LONGER. BUT IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN.
UNLESS ALBERT YEATS GOES TO HELL.
EXACTLY. HE'LL LANGUISH THERE FOREVER IN TORMENT. NO BETTERMENT OF EARTH.
SO WE HAVE TO SAVE YEATS. I UNDERSTAND THAT.
NOW EXPLAIN HOW I GOT TO BE A MURDERER. YOU CLAIM NOT TO HAVE POSSESSED ME.
EVEN THOUGH EVERYTHING FITS YOUR WAYS.
EVEN THOUGH FAUST DESCRIBED MY POSSESSOR AS SOMEONE LIKE YOU... A SPIRIT WHO KNEW CIRCUS LIFE.
THE DEVIL SENT HIS MESSENGER TO FIND ALBERT AND CLAIM HIS SOUL. HE'S OUT THERE IN GOTHAM LOOKING FOR YEATS, AS WE SIT HERE GABBING.
YEATS WAS WORKING AS A DISH WASHER IN THAT RESTAURANT. THE SPIRIT, NEVER ONE FOR SUBTLETY, POSSESSED YOU AND HIT THE PLACE HARD.
ALL THAT DEATH.
YEATS ESCAPED IN THE MADNESS. I WAS ALERTED BY THE NEWS COVERAGE AND GOT THERE JUST IN TIME TO YANK YOUR BUTT OUT OF THE SOUP.


SO THIS SPIRIT? IS IT ONE WHO I MIGHT HAVE ENCOUNTERED PRIOR?
FOR YOUR SAKE I HOPE NOT.
LIKE IT OR NOT, I GUESS I'D CALL MYSELF RAMA KUSHNA'S AGENT ON EARTH.
THE DEVIL HAS ONE TOO. HE ALSO CAME FROM THE CIRCUS, THOUGH HOPEFULLY THAT'S WHERE THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN US ENDS.
BUT HE'S YOUR OPPOSITE NUMBER?
RAMA MIGHT CALL HIM THE YIN TO MY YANG, YEAH.
NAME?
A SIMPLE ONE FOR SUCH A COMPLEX BEING.
HE'S CALLED THE CLOWN.
GOD WE TRUST
TY
194


"THE CLOWN WAS PART OF A EUROPEAN CIRCUS. GERMAN. MAYBE AUSTRIAN, I'M NOT SURE.
"ANYWAY IT DIDN'T MATTER WHAT SIDE OF THE BORDER YOU WERE ON AT THAT TIME. LIFE WAS PRETTY HARD. YEAH, THE 1920'S WERE A KILLER.
"AND SO WAS THE CLOWN. HE SAW IT AS A MEANS OF STAYING ALIVE...STAYING ONE BETTER THAN THE NEXT GUY.
"SO HE'D KILL AND STEAL AND KIDNAP AND RAPE AND DO WHATEVER HE DAMNED WELL PLEASED.
"AT FIRST IT WAS FOR THE COIN. LIKE I SAY, GERMANY... AUSTRIA... ALL THOSE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AFTER WWI WERE BAD PLACES TO BREATHE AIR.
"BUT BEFORE LONG THE CLOWN STARTED COMMITTING CRIMES FOR THE SAKE OF IT, 'CAUSE HE ENJOYED BEING BAD.
"AND THE CIRCUS HAD ALWAYS ALREADY MOVED ON AND AWAY WITH HIM BEFORE THE BODIES WERE FOUND... HE MADE SURE OF THAT."


"THIS CONTINUED THROUGHOUT THE 1920'S AND '30S.
"AND THEN THE NAZIS CAME.
"THE CLOWN WAS GETTING OLD. HE KNEW HIS CIRCUS DAYS WERE NUMBERED. HE FIGURED TO GET OUT AHEAD. SO HE BETRAYED HIS FRIENDS.
"MOST OF THE CIRCUS WERE GYPSIES, WHO WERE ON THE LIST FOR EXTERMINATION JUST LIKE THE JEWS AND GAYS.
"THE SS PAID HIM COIN FOR THE LOCATION THE TROUPE WAS HIDING IN. HE TOOK IT AND WHISTLED A TUNE AS HE AMBLED AWAY.
"THING HE DIDN'T KNOW WAS THAT ONE OF THE PERFORMERS HAD BEEN SENT OUT FOR FOOD AT THE TIME THE NAZIS SWOOPED IN.
"HE WAS ALIVE AND HUNTING THE CLOWN. HE LOCATED HIM IN PARIS A YEAR LATER AND PUT A STILETTO IN HIM.
"AND THAT'S WHEN THE DEVIL... SMOKY OLD NICK... HE STEPS UP TO THE PLATE AND OFFERS THE CLOWN THE JOB OF BEING HIS SPIRITUAL AGENT ON EARTH.
"BEING EVIL TO THE MARROW, THE DEVIL FIGURES THE CLOWN TO BE THE PERFECT AGENT. WHICH HE IS.
"I'VE HEARD OF THE CLOWN. FROM A FEW PLACES I HEARD OF HIM. BUT WE'VE YET TO MEET.
"I CAN'T SAY I'VE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO IT, BUT I DON'T SEE HOW I CAN AVOID IT THIS TIME. NOT WHEN YEATS' SOUL IS THE PRIZE AT STAKE."


SO BEFORE WE GO AFTER YEATS...TELL ME. IN A CRAZY SCENE LIKE THIS, KNOWLEDGE IS EVERYTHING. DO I KNOW EVERYTHING NOW?
ALL THAT I NEED TO?
UH HUH, BATS. YEAH, FO'SURE. YOU'RE AS CLUED IN AS I AM.
GOOD.




"WHAT SHOULD I DO," THINKS ALBERT YEATS. "WHERE SHOULD I GO?"
"I FEEL SO TIRED. SO WITHOUT HOPE."
AND THE WIND IS CHILL UPON HIS BACK.
LIQUOR
RED BIRD
ALL RIGHT SON, TURN IT ON.
EXIT
18
DO YOU THINK HE'LL COME, SIR?
WE'LL SEE.
"NO HOPE AT ALL."


IQUOR
RED BIRD
I TOLD YOU, ALBERT.
I TOLD YOU...
...YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM US.
BANG
BANG
POW
POW
POW
BANG
ZIINNG
POW
BANG
KRASH


POW!
SO THE DUDE GIVES ME TEN DOLLARS.
FOR WASHING HIS WINDSHIELD? COOLNESS!
FIGURE HE MISTOOK A JEFFERSON FOR A WASHINGTON.
YEAH. MUST BE--
LEMME THROUGH!
HEY! QUIT SHOVING!
CRAZY MOTHER--
ALL CARS TO THE PARIS OVERPASS. REPORT OF MEN WITH ANIMAL HEADS. BELIEVED TO BE SOMEHOW RELATED TO THE HUNT FOR BATMAN. USE CAUTION. REPEAT--
SOUNDS LIKE DESHARD'S MEN HAVE BEATEN US TO SOMETHING.
LET'S HOPE WE CAN BEAT THE COPS.


AREN'T YOU GETTING TIRED BY NOW, ALBERT? OF RUNNING?
ME, I'M WAY SICK OF CHASING. I'LL TELL YOU THAT FOR NOTHING.
YEAH, BUT IT DON'T MATTER. NOT NO MORE...
...IT'S OVER.
GRRRRR
NOT BY A MILE!
WHRIPP
WWHRIPP


WHOA, BATS. YOU NEED A HAND?
WHAK
BOSTON? IS THAT YOU?
THUD
WAS ME, BATS. NOW I'M HERE.


GOT THE BASTARD! NOW--
WHAK
WHAK
AHHHH!
AND NOW I'M HERE!
RRRULF
NOW. ESCAPE.
BOSTON?
WHOA. BATMAN. ARE YOU--


FREEZE, BATMAN!
YOU CAN'T RUN!
NO ESCAPE.
GET YOUR HANDS IN THE AIR!
BATMAN?
BOSTON, TAKE YEATS. GET HIM TO SAFETY!
YEATS, FOLLOW THE DOG! TRUST IT!
I'LL DRAW THEIR FIRE!
I'VE BUSINESS ELSEWHERE!
NAB EVERYBODY! SORT IT OUT LATER!
DON'T LET ANYONE LEAVE!
THIS WAY!
QUICK!
COME ON!
STOP!
THERE GOES BATMAN!
HE'S GETTING AWAY!
Business with Gordon.
An explanation I hope he believes.

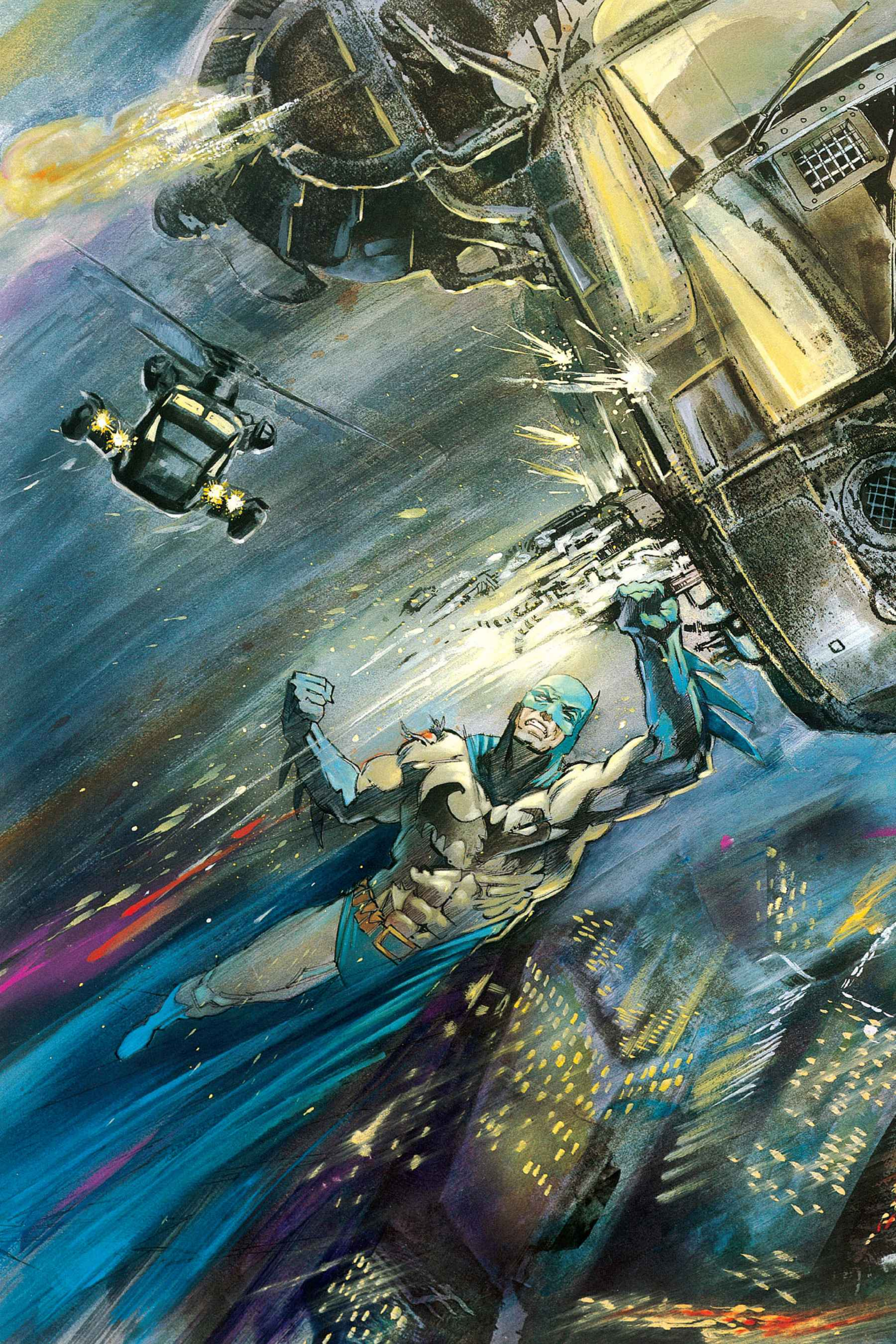

JIM.
YOU CAME. I'M GLAD.
BECAUSE YOU SEE NOW THAT I COULD NEVER HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT SLAUGHTER?
OR BECAUSE YOU WANT ME CAPTURED AND YOU HOPED...
...THAT OLD HABITS WOULD DIE HARD.
MARTIN LOPEZ WAS MY FRIEND, BATMAN. AS GOOD A FRIEND AS YOU. HIS DEATH WAS A SHOCK.
I DIDN'T KILL HIM, JIM. YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE THAT.
I DON'T.


A FLUTTER OF MOTHS...
ALL RIGHT, MEN! YOU CAN SHOW YOUR-SELVES!
...DRAWN BY THE LIGHT.
JIM.
I'M YOUR FRIEND.
NOT ANYMORE.
I'VE GOT HIM TARGETED, COMMISSIONER.
GOOD.
TAKE HIM OUT...


...ALL OF Y--
PILOT? WHAT HAPPENED? WHY DID HE FALL--
HEY, BATS!
...ME SAVING YOUR TAIL IS GETTING TO BE A HABIT.
BOSTON?
GET US OUT OF--
AHH!
Shoulder's hit. Hope I can still find my mark.
Lucky.

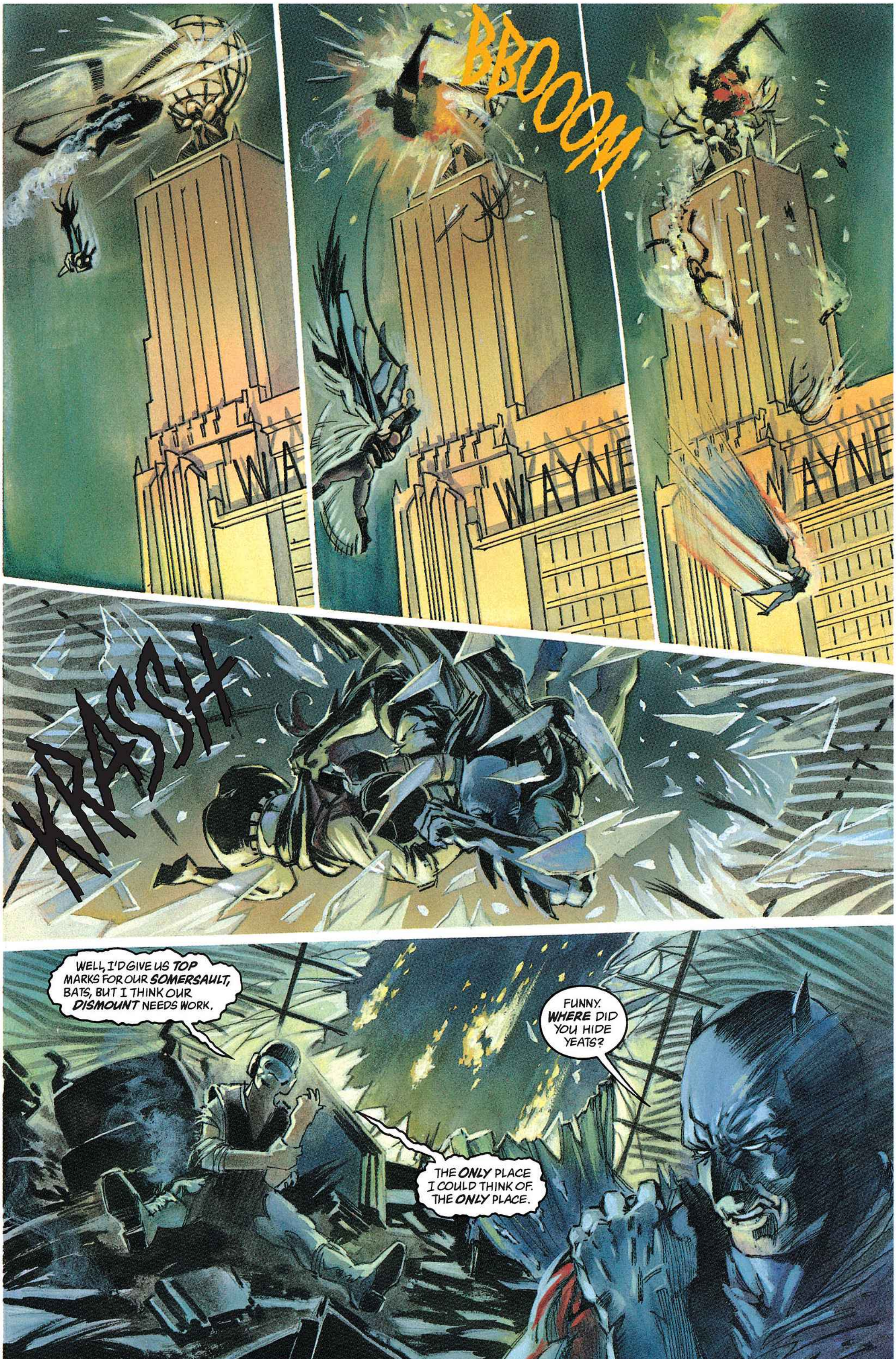

AIR SUPPORT. NOW! GET AFTER THEM. BRING THEM DOWN! SHOOT THEM DOWN!
BUT IT MIGHT CRASH IN THE CITY...ON PEOPLE IF WE--
DOES IT SOUND LIKE I CARE?! DO AS YOU'RE TOLD!
RATATATATAT
OPAL CITY
THE GEM OF OUR NATION
HOTE


Have to get in there. **Before** he--
Before--






MY GOD, BOSTON. WHAT WAS GOING ON? YOU ALMOST KILLED ME!
YEAH, WELL I WAS TRYING TO AVOID THOSE OTHER CHOPPERS KILLING YOU. GIVE ME A BREAK. I PICKED UP A FEW SKILLS FROM POSSESSING PEOPLE. I KNOW HOW TO FLY IN A STRAIGHT LINE, BUT THIS CHASE THING IS TOO MUCH.
LOOK OUT! WE'RE GOING TO HIT THE STATUE!
THIS CHOPPER'S STABILIZERS HAVE HAD IT. TOO MANY BULLETS IN THE CHASE. I CAN'T TURN.
AYNE
DUSTRIES
ARNING CARGO RAMP OPEN
WE HAVE TO GO!
I CAN'T HOLD IT, BATS.
THEN DONT!


BBOOOM
WAYNE
KRASSH
WELL, I'D GIVE US TOP MARKS FOR OUR SOMERSAULT, BATS, BUT I THINK OUR DISMOUNT NEEDS WORK.
FUNNY. WHERE DID YOU HIDE YEATS?
THE ONLY PLACE I COULD THINK OF. THE ONLY PLACE.


CHAPLIN HAS FORGOTTEN THAT A SOUL DOESN'T SELL ITSELF.
AND CHAPLIN HAS FORGOTTEN EVERYTHING HE'S DONE, AND ALL HE'S HAD FROM THE SELLING OF IT.
THE BOOK IS ONE OF THE FEW THINGS HE'S KEPT FROM A SORRY CHILDHOOD OF POVERTY AND WANT.
HE REMEMBERS LIFE WAS SAD BUT SIMPLE AND PURE AND HAD A BRIGHTNESS TO ITS EDGES THAT HIS WORLD NOW, ALL WARM AND FUR-LINED, HAS DULLED AWAY.
THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER
MARK TWAIN
"IF I CAN KEEP MY SOUL," CHAPLIN THINKS, "I'LL CHANGE."
"I SWEAR TO GOD I'LL CHANGE."
THEN HE REALIZES HE SOUNDS LIKE A BAD IMITATION OF EBENEZER SCROOGE AND BEGINS TO LAUGH.
SAD LAUGHTER.


THEIR HELICOPTER WENT DOWN, COMMISSIONER.
OH?
BUT BATMAN AND THE PILOT GOT AWAY.
OF COURSE THEY DID. DID YOU THINK THE OUTCOME OF ALL THIS WOULD BE ANY DIFFERENT?
SO WHAT NOW?
YOU RELY ON YOUR COMMISSIONER'S FORESIGHT.
THE BULLETS I ISSUED EVERYONE WERE AN EXPERIMENTAL TYPE. WE ONLY GOT A SHIPMENT FOR TRIAL RECENTLY. FORTUNATE. DON'T YOU THINK?
BUT THEN,,, I ALWAYS HAVE BEEN.
EACH BULLET HAS A HOMING BEACON FITTED JUST UNDER ITS HEAD. UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN, BATMAN IS CARRYING ONE SUCH BULLET IN HIS SHOULDER.
COMMISSIONER. WE'RE GETTING THEM. THEY'RE ON THE RADAR SCREEN.
WHERE ARE THEY ?
ALL UNITS TO CLEMENT PARK. HILLS BROTHERS' CIRCUS IN CLEMENT PARK. BATMAN IS BELIEVED TO BE THERE AND ALL CAUTION SHOULD BE USED IN APPREHENDING--
CLEMENT PARK, REMY.
YEAH, I HEARD,,,


"...HILLS BROTHERS' CIRCUS."





I WAS WORRIED YOU WOULDN'T COME BACK FOR ME. DIDN'T KNOW WHERE TO RUN.
YOUR RUNNING'S OVER, YEATS. I HAVE MEANS OF GETTING YOU OUT OF TOWN. I HAVE PLACES OUT OF TOWN WHERE YOU CAN STAY.
I WAS JUST GONNA SMUGGLE HIM OUT OF GOTHAM WITH THE CIRCUS.
OH, I THINK AFTER ALL MR. YEATS HAS ENDURED HE DESERVES A BETTER MODE OF TRANSPORTATION THAN THAT.
WHY ARE YOU GUYS DOING ALL THIS ANYWAY?
ERR...YOU'RE AN INNOCENT, YEATSY. ME AND THE BAT GUY HERE SAVE INNOCENTS.
I'M NOT THAT CLEAN, GUYS. DON'T THINK I'M A SAINT OR NOTHING.
WE KNOW. BUT I DOUBT YOU'VE DONE ANYTHING WORTHY OF LOSING YOUR SOUL.
SO LET'S GET YOU OUT OF HERE...
ERR, I THINK WE MAY HAVE TO PUT THAT PLAN ON HOLD, OLD BUDDY...
"...JUST FOR A MOMENT OR TWO."
HILLS BROTHERS CIRCUS
SOME OF YOU GO TO THE OTHER ENTRANCE. SEAL THE TENT OFF.
AND HARRIS...
SIR?
...TAKE SOME MEN BACK OUTSIDE AND BEGIN A WAGON-BY-WAGON SEARCH. THEY'RE HERE SOMEWHERE, I KNOW IT.



SEE, I SAID YOU'D BE FINE HERE. THEY THINK YOU'RE A PART OF THE SHOW.
NOW FIND YEATS. WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME.
TINY
I'LL TAKE THE POLICE. YOU TAKE DESHARD AND HIS FREAKS.
YOU GOT IT, BATS.
YEATS. USE THE CONFUSION TO RUN. GET AS FAR FROM THIS AS YOU CAN.
NO. AFTER WHAT YOU GUYS HAVE DONE FOR ME, I'M THROUGH RUNNING.
I'M NOT LEAVING YOU. WE GET OUT OF THIS TOGETHER OR NOT AT ALL.
ALL RIGHT, THEN STAY OUT OF SIGHT...
...AND OUT OF THE WAY.
PSSFFFTT
TRICK OR TREAT, MY THREE ANIMAL CRACKERS.
NH



TAKE YOU DOWN MYSELF!
JIM! NO!
KILL YOU. GET YEATS.
KRACK
How did he--
--know--
WHY, REMY?
THIS IS CRAZY!
OOF!


He must be--
WHAK
THDD
UHH.
CHUK
URR
THWACK
AHH
NOW, I CAN TAKE CARE OF--
OH.

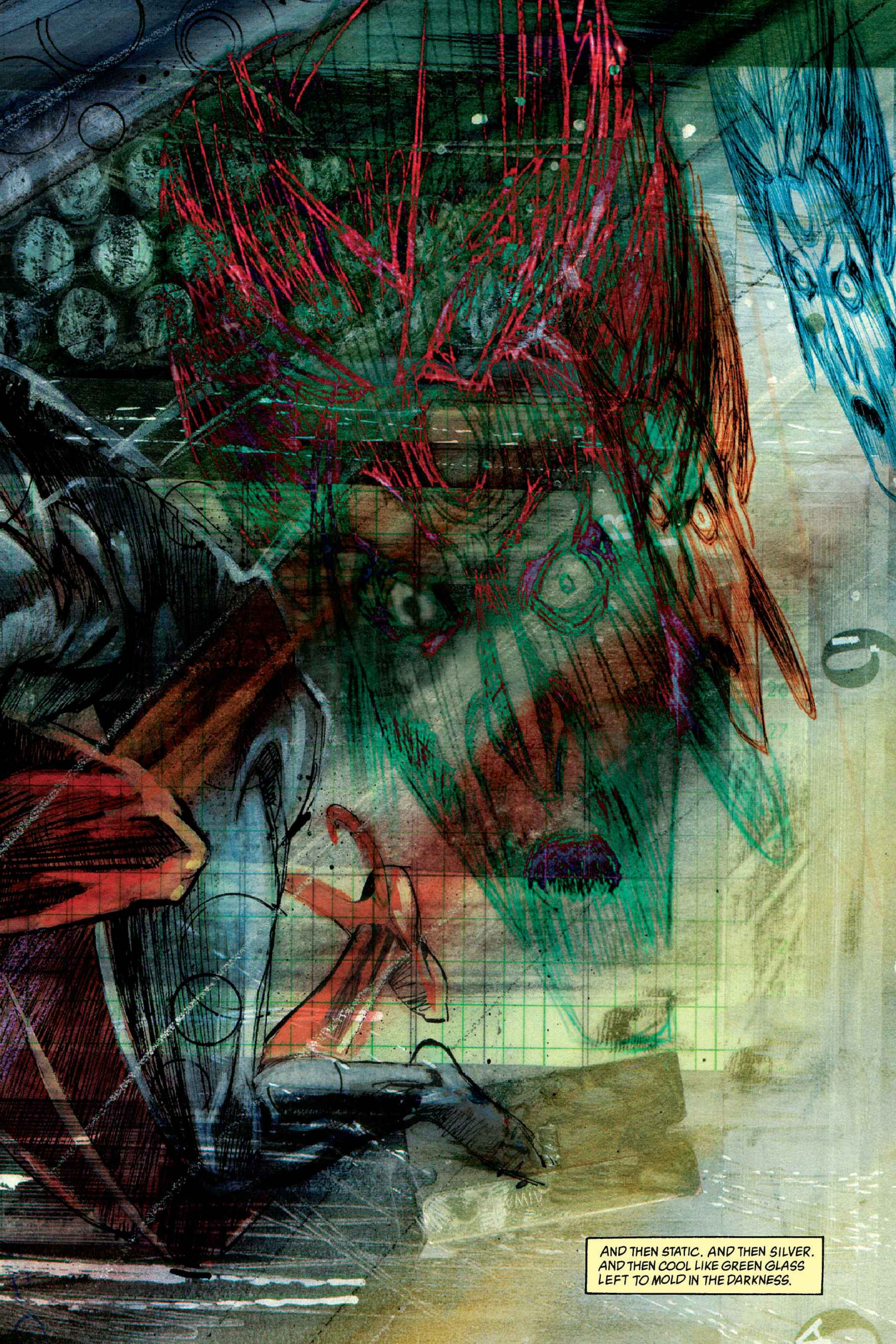

AH, I SEE YOU THROUGH THE MEAT YOU WEAR. DEADMAN. AT LAST OUR PATHS CROSS.
THE CLOWN!
CLOWN!
GHH
BENEATH THE CIRCUS TENT, TOO. HOW SUPERBLY FITTING.
YEAH, WHATEVER. YOU CRAZY SPOOK! ALL THIS...TIME YOU'VE BEEN IN GORDON?


MY GOD! DO YOU SEE IT?
WHAT? NO. WHAT DO YOU SEE?
I SEE IT. THERE'S SOMETHING COMING OUT OF GORDON. AND THE BLACK GUY. THERE'S TWO GHOSTS.
I DON'T SEE IT.
I SEE THEM. HEAR THEM TOO.
YEAH, I HEAR THEM. WHAT ARE THEY?
I DON'T... EVEN KNOW IF... GORDON KNEW LOPEZ.
SO THE WHOLE REVENGE THING? GORDON'S VENDETTA?
I KNEW IF... BATMAN WAS INVOLVED... IF THE HEAT WAS ON HIM... HE'D GET TO THE BOTTOM... OF THINGS. FIND YEATS... FOR ME.
SO THE... RESTAURANT... SLAUGHTER WAS... YOU AS WELL? POSSESSING... BATMAN?
OF COURSE.
IF I COULD KILL YOU, CLOWN!...


CRATERS OF HAZE PLUMMET THROUGH THE SOUND OF NOTHING.
IF I COULD ONLY KILL YOU!
ACROBAT AND FOOL BEGIN THEIR DANCE IN TRIPLE TIME, THE SUNLIGHT OF A DARK SUN FALLING UPON THEIR FACES LIKE A WARM SEPTEMBER SIGH.


AND THEN THE HEAT IS HELLISH FIERCE. AND THEN COOL LIKE GREEN GLASS LEFT TO MOLD IN THE DARKNESS.


THE RICHNESS OF CRISP SHATTERING, MARBLED AND FINE, IS A LOOSENESS AROUND THIS MERRY PAIR.
THE DANCE BECOMES WARM, LIKE A TANGO OR SAMBA. THE ARDOR OF THEIR HATE, SO FIERCE AND LIKE THAT OF DOGS, THAT IT SEEMS ALMOST A ROMANCE.


AND THEN STATIC. AND THEN SILVER. AND THEN COOL LIKE GREEN GLASS LEFT TO MOLD IN THE DARKNESS.


THE CEILING BEGINS TO RISE. HIGH. IT TURNS TO BUTTERFLIES. GLASS FALLS WITH BRIGHT DELAY.
THE DANCE ENDS AND BEGINS AGAIN. SLOW LIKE A WALTZ AT A RETIREES SOCIAL, WITH THE PARTNERS WARY OF JOINTS AND HIPS AND THIN, REEDY FLESH. BUT AS THE MUSIC EBBS TO A QUIET BLEAT, SO NEW TUNES BEGIN. A CHOIR OF SEAGULLS AND CAULIFLOWERS.


AND THEN THE BLOOD THAT DOES NOT BLEED. AND THEN THE RAPE OF SOLACE. AND THEN COOL LIKE GREEN GLASS LEFT TO MOLD IN THE DARKNESS.



WHAT... HAPPENED?
I WAS POSSESSED BY A GHOST WHEN THE RESTAURANT SLAUGHTER OCCURRED. YOU'VE BEEN POSSESSED BY THE SAME BEING FOR THE ENTIRE TIME SINCE THEN.
CAN... YOU PROVE? HOW... CAN WE... PROVE?
I'D SAY WE'VE GOT WITNESSES. MORE THAN ENOUGH.
"I HAVE A FRIEND. ANOTHER GHOST. DEADMAN. HE FOUGHT THE SPIRIT THAT TOOK US BOTH OVER.
"SOMEHOW THEIR BATTLE BECAME VISIBLE TO PEOPLE. AUDIBLE TOO.
"AND?"
"NOT EVERYONE IS AS USED TO DEALING WITH THE FANTASTIC AS WE ARE."


OH GOD! THEY'RE BACK.
THE GHOSTS ARE--
GONE.
NOT OVER!
BATMAN?! WHAT ARE--
ALBERT YEATS!!


I'LL KILL HIM, YEATS. I'LL KILL BATMAN.
DO YOU WANT THAT?
HE'S DONE SO MUCH FOR YOU. FOR YOUR WORTHLESS SELF. AND I'LL KILL HIM FOR IT.
GOTHAM KNIGHTS
DO YOU WANT THAT?
NO!
ALBERT. IT'S ME. BOSTON.
LISTEN. BATMAN WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO SACRIFICE YOURSELF FOR HIM.
I KNOW BATMAN. I KNOW WHAT HE'D WANT.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS.
OH YES I DO.
I CAN'T RUN FROM MY MISTAKES. NOT ANYMORE. I'M ALREADY THE REASON THOSE POOR PEOPLE IN THE RESTAURANT WERE MURDERED.
MY LIFE WILL BE OVER SOON ENOUGH ANYWAY. WHY SHOULD I PUT IT OFF? IF I CAN SAVE SOMEONE LIKE BATMAN. IF I CAN DO ONE DECENT THING IN MY WHOLE MISERABLE LIFE, THEN MAYBE MY PASSING WILL MEAN SOMETHING.


OTHER-WISE...
...I MAY AS WELL HAVE NEVER LIVED AT ALL.
HERE I AM, CLOWN SPOOK.
YOU WANT ME. HERE I AM.
NO.
YOU'RE NOT THE ONE.
NOT ANY-MORE.
WHOA.
BATMAN!
I'M FINE, JIM. I'M FINE...
"...THE CLOWN SPIRIT HAS GONE."


NO WORD FROM REMY DESHARD. NOTHING.
EXCEPT THE CLOCK.
DESHARD HAS FAILED AND CHAPLIN HAS LOST.
CHAPLIN SIGHS WITH SAD FEAR, WHISPERS THREE WORDS...
GOD. FORGIVE ME.
...AND AWAITS HIS FATE IN SILENCE.



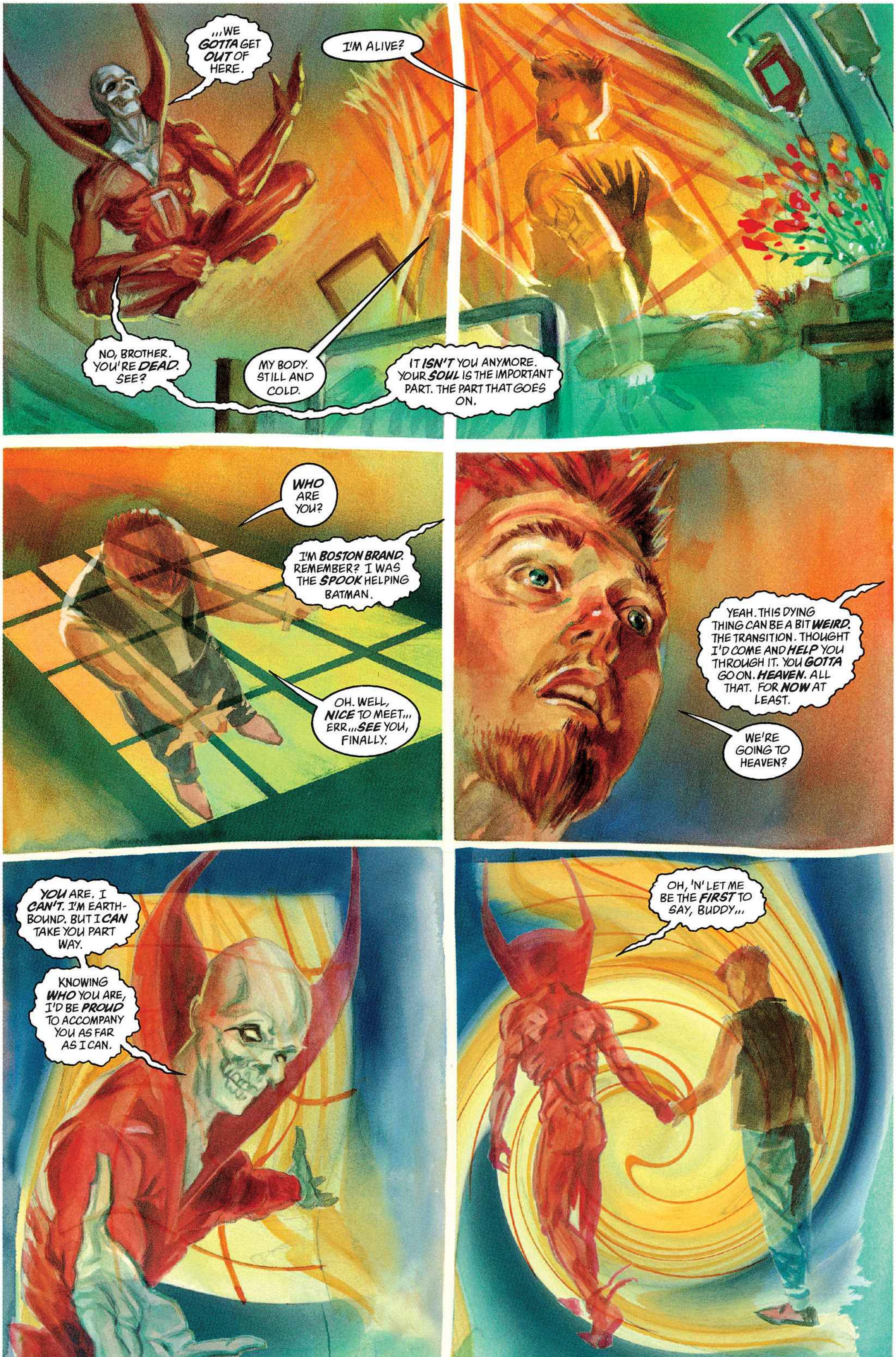
CIRCUS
I HAD TO CONCENTRATE WHILE ME AND THE CLOWN HAD OUR SCRAP. THOUGHT MY HEAD WAS GONNA BURST FROM IT. HURT LIKE HELL.
I HOPED THAT THE ENERGY OF HIS ECTOPLASM 'N' MINE TOGETHER, LOCKED... COMBINED MIGHT MANIFEST ITSELF.
HOPED THAT SOMEONE MIGHT SEE IT. ONE OR TWO PEOPLE WITH DORMANT PSYCHIC ABILITY, AND YOU'D HAVE WITNESSES THAT'D CLEAR YOU MAYBE.
OTHERWISE YOU COULD SWEAR ON A STACK OF BIBLES AND NO ONE WOULD BUY THAT IT WASN'T YOU DID THOSE MURDERS IN THE RESTAURANT.
YOU DID FINE, BOSTON. YOU SAVED ME. I OWE YOU.
THAT'S WHY I TALKED SO MUCH WHILE ME AND THE CLOWN FOUGHT. GET HIM TALKING, 'N' MAYBE SOMEONE WOULD HEAR WHAT HE SAID.
THIRTY-NINE PEOPLE SAW YOUR FIGHT. MORE THAN ENOUGH TO CLEAR ME.
AND YOUR FIGHT WITH THE CLOWN, THROUGH THE VARIOUS DIMENSIONS AND LEVELS OF EXISTENCE.
THAT TOO. IT DELAYED EVENTS LONG ENOUGH... BOUGHT YEATS TIME...
...AND MADE CHAPLIN'S RUN OUT.
LIKE I SAY, BOSTON. I OWE YOU.
JUST TRUST ME NEXT TIME, OKAY?
BELIEVE IN ME.
I WILL, BOSTON. I PROMISE.
PROMISE WHAT? AND WHO'S BOSTON?

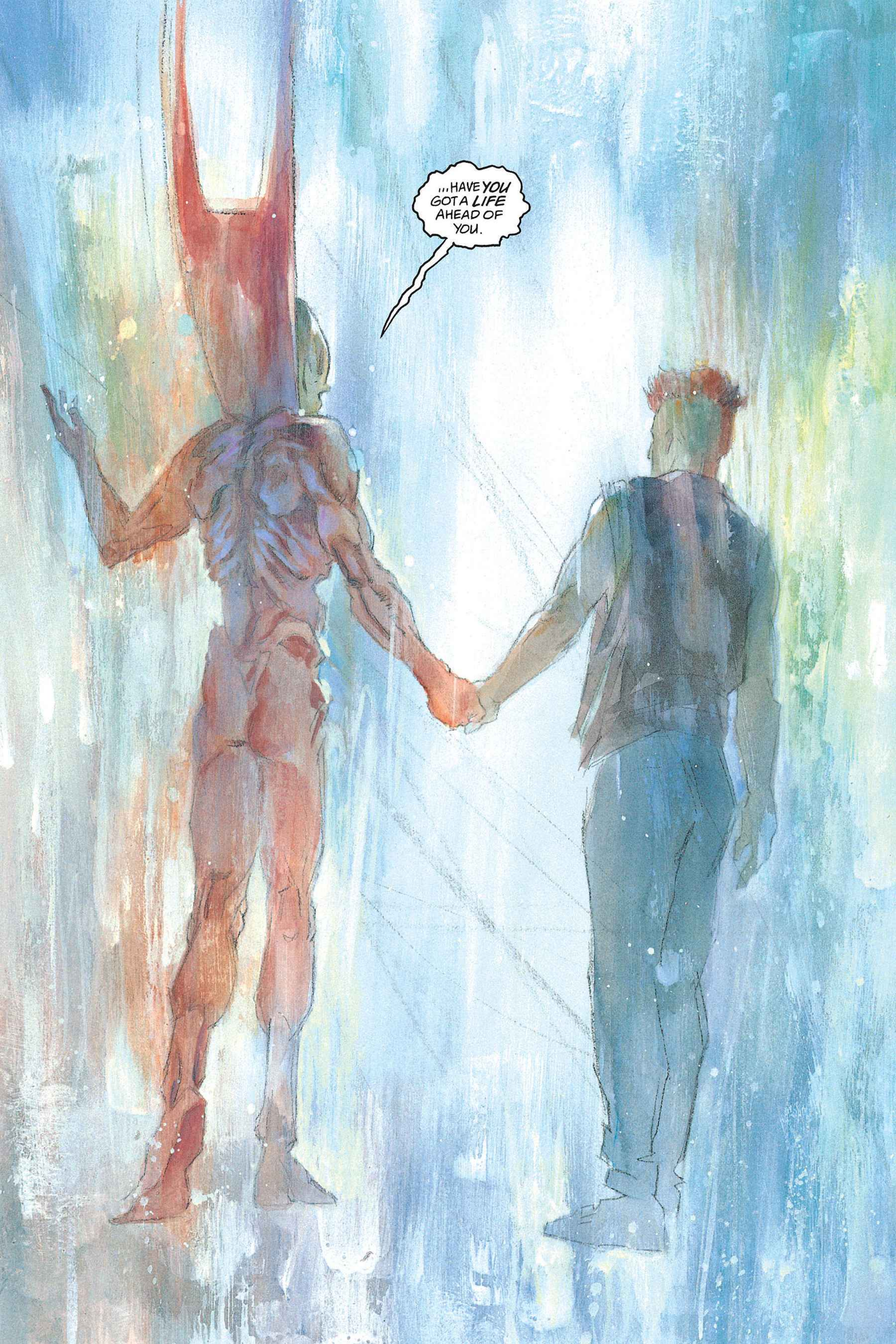

ALBERT, I'VE LEARNED THAT YOU'RE NOT WELL. THESE ARE DOCTORS WHO WORK FOR A WEALTHY FRIEND OF MINE. GO WITH THEM.
THEY'LL DO WHAT THEY CAN FOR YOU. THEY'LL MAKE SURE YOU'RE COMFORTABLE.
WAYNE MED
I'M NOT EXPECTING MIRACLES, BATMAN. I KNOW THE SCORE. IF I CAN SEE THE END OF THE YEAR, I'LL BE THANKFUL.
IT'S BEEN AN HONOR TO MEET YOU, BATMAN. EVEN THOUGH I WAS NEVER A GUY ON THE UP AND UP, I ALWAYS ADMIRED YOU. THE BRAVE THINGS YOU DID...YOUR HEROISM.
NO, YEATS. TODAY YOU WERE THE HERO.
AND REGARDING OUR MEETING...
...THE HONOR IS MINE.


Ghosts and devils and magical things.
I hate such times... when a bitter autumn brew infects my life with strangeness I can, at best, but hope to stem the tide of.
Criminals are a superstitious, cowardly lot. They fear the dark and the night. What would they do if they knew that within those shadows lurk fears beyond even those imagined by evil hearts?
Yet I must fight these terrors.
Thanking whatever powers there be, for beings like Boston Brand to aid me in such fickle wars.
Yes. Beings like Deadman.
And men like Albert Yeats.



YEATS IS LUCKY.
HE LIVES TO SEE MARCH.
HE THINKS OF A GREAT APRIL FOOL'S JOKE TO PLAY ON ONE OF THE NURSES AND HOPES HE'LL BE AROUND TO DO IT.
ALAS.
...UHHH.
THAT IS NOT TO BE.
Albert, Keep fightin
Bruce Way
HEY, ALBERT!
DON'T JUST LIE THERE!...


...WE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE.
I'M ALIVE?
NO, BROTHER. YOU'RE DEAD. SEE?
MY BODY. STILL AND COLD.
IT ISN'T YOU ANYMORE. YOUR SOUL IS THE IMPORTANT PART. THE PART THAT GOES ON.
WHO ARE YOU?
I'M BOSTON BRAND. REMEMBER? I WAS THE SPOOK HELPING BATMAN.
OH. WELL, NICE TO MEET... ERR...SEE YOU, FINALLY.
YEAH. THIS DYING THING CAN BE A BIT WEIRD. THE TRANSITION. THOUGHT I'D COME AND HELP YOU THROUGH IT. YOU GOTTA GO ON. HEAVEN. ALL THAT. FOR NOW AT LEAST.
WE'RE GOING TO HEAVEN?
YOU ARE. I CAN'T. I'M EARTH-BOUND. BUT I CAN TAKE YOU PART WAY.
KNOWING WHO YOU ARE, I'D BE PROUD TO ACCOMPANY YOU AS FAR AS I CAN.
OH, 'N' LET ME BE THE FIRST TO SAY, BUDDY...


...HAVE YOU GOT A LIFE AHEAD OF YOU.

BATMAN IS A MURDERER. A MANIAC.

Or so it seems to everyone witnessing his slaughter of a restaurant full of customers. Batman himself has no memory of the event. Could it be true? Could his obsession have finally given way to madness?

Batman investigates this mystery uncovering secrets and lies and how the destiny of one man might change the world. He'll meet ghosts both bad and good — the latter being Deadman, his friend and ally in many past tales. Deadman must help Batman again as their foes line up to include not just evil millionaires and mages— men who walk the earth— but also a supernatural emissary of Satan himself, hungering for souls.

A tale of mystery and the supernatural... and death and glory.